

**PARCC March 2013 Guidance Summary**  
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The PARCC March 2013 guidance; which will continue to be refined (though it states large changes are not anticipated) after the conclusion of research studies as well as large scale pilot testing in spring of 2014 includes information about:

**1. The design of PARCC's English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics assessment:**

- Will be designed to show important insights into how well critical knowledge, skills and abilities essential for young people to thrive in college and careers are being mastered.
- PARCC assessments in English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics will be administered in grades 3-11 beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. Tests at each grade level will be based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for that grade level. In high school, the mathematics tests will be based on CCSS designated for two course sequences – a traditional sequence including Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II; and an integrated sequence including Mathematics 1, 2, and 3. For more information regarding high school mathematics course standards, readers should refer to the Mathematics Model Content Frameworks at <http://www.parcconline.org/parcc-model-content-frameworks>

In order to promote improvements in curriculum and instruction and support various forms of accountability, the PARCC assessments are designed to measure the full range of the CCSS and full continuum of student abilities, including the performance of high and low performing students. To effectively carry out the PARCC design, assessments in both content areas will be administered in two components:

- **A performance-based assessment (PBA)** component, administered after approximately 75% of the school year, The ELA/Literacy PBAs at each grade level will include three tasks: a research simulation, a literary analysis, and a narrative task. For each task, students will be asked to read one or more texts, answer several short comprehension and vocabulary questions, and write an essay that requires them to draw evidence from the text(s).
- **An end of year assessment (EOY)** component, administered after approximately 90% of the school year. The ELA/Literacy EOYs at each grade level will include 4-5 texts, both literary and informational (including social science/historical, scientific, and technical texts at grades 6-11). A number of short-answer comprehension and vocabulary questions will also be associated with each text.

Results of the ELA/Literacy assessments will be reported in three major categories: (1) ELA/Literacy; (2) reading and comprehending a range of sufficiently complex texts independently (reading) and (3) writing effectively when using and/or analyzing sources (writing). ELA/Literacy results will be based on a composite of students' reading and writing scores. Students will receive both a scale score and performance level scores for ELA/Literacy, and scale scores for the reading and writing categories. Performance level scores will be reported according to five levels. More information about the PARCC's performance levels can be found by visiting <http://www.parcconline.org/parcc-assessment-policies>

- The mathematics PBAs at each grade level will include both short- and extended-response questions focused on conceptual knowledge and skills, and the mathematical practices of reasoning and modeling. The mathematics EOY assessments will be comprised primarily of short-answer questions focused on conceptual knowledge, skills, and understandings.

Overall results of the mathematics assessments will be reported in terms of scale and performance level scores.

A full listing of the reporting categories for both ELA/Literacy and mathematics assessments will be released along with updated testing blueprints **later this spring**. The blueprints will provide greater detail about the nature of each content area assessment in terms of the specific CCSS that are addressed in each component (PBA, EOY), as well as the number, types, and value of the items that will appear on each component. Readers can find more information about PARCC item and task prototypes and the purposes, design, and content of the assessments by visiting: <http://www.parcconline.org/samples/item-task-prototypes>.

## **2. The number of testing sessions and approximate testing time:**

The PARCC PBA and EOY assessments will be administered in a total of nine sessions. At each grade level the PBA component will require **five sessions** – three sessions for ELA/Literacy and two sessions for mathematics. The EOY component at each grade level will require **four sessions** – two sessions for ELA/Literacy and two sessions for mathematics.

Appendix A provides a breakdown of the sessions by grade level, including an estimate of the amount of time the typical student will need to complete each session, which is presented or shown in the table as the “estimated time on task.” These estimates may be refined based on the results of research and field tests conducted over the next 18 months. While it is anticipated that most students will complete each session, which is presented or shown in the table as the “estimated time on task.” **These estimates may be refined based on the results of research and field tests conducted over the next 18 months.**

Appendix A page 7 and 8 at this link: [http://parcconline.org/sites/parcc/files/PARCC%20Assessment%20Administration%20Guidance\\_FINAL\\_0.pdf](http://parcconline.org/sites/parcc/files/PARCC%20Assessment%20Administration%20Guidance_FINAL_0.pdf)

## **3. PARCC testing windows:**

Schools will have a maximum of 20 school days to administer the Performance Based Assessment (PBA) component and a maximum of 20 school days to administer the End of Year Assessment component (EOY). It is important to note, however, that while the testing windows will span 20 days for each component, schools will be able to complete administration of the tests in fewer days, if they have sufficient capacity to administer assessments to large numbers of students simultaneously. The 20 day windows are provided primarily to provide ample opportunity to administer the assessments via computer in schools with a limited number of devices and limited bandwidth. While the testing window in some schools may span as many as 20 days, individual students will participate in testing sessions for both the PBA and EOY components over five to nine days. **At a later date, each state in PARCC will provide additional guidance to their districts regarding the specific testing windows in which they may participate.**

## **4. “Rule of thumb” guidance for the number of computer devices needed to administer the assessments – remember this is PARCC and still differs due to the guidance of testing window that SED has said to use at this point:**

The number of devices a school needs for assessment is largely dependent on:

- 1) the number of students enrolled at each tested grade level;
- 2) the number of students that can be tested simultaneously given the way in which available devices are deployed (e.g., in labs, in classroom, on carts, etc.); and

3) the available bandwidth capacity.

To assist schools in planning for an adequate number of devices for the PARCC assessments in 2014-2015, some “rule of thumb” guidance is provided in Table 1 below.

PARCC Guidance in the table is divided between schools that will be testing three grade levels (e.g., K-5, 6-8, 9-12 schools), and those that will be testing six grades (e.g., K-8 schools). The guidance is then divided further between the **minimum number of devices** that a school will need to administer the assessments within 20 and the **recommended number of devices**, which is the number needed to administer the assessments in fewer than 20 days. These are general guidelines and states and districts may wish to recommend *lower* student to device ratios that will ensure that schools can continue with computer-based instruction at the same time as they are conducting computer-based assessments.

Table 1: School type	Minimum # of devices:	Recommended # of devices:
For a school with three tested grades (K-5, 6-8, 9-12)	One device for every two students in the largest tested grade	One device per student for the largest tested grade
For a school with six tested grades (K-8)	One device per student for the largest tested grade	One device per student for the two largest tested grades

**5. A new tool designed to assist local policy makers and educators build the technology capacity they need to administer PARCC’s computer-based assessments in 2014-15. This is a spreadsheet – NYSED’s guidance on the use of this new tool is: “If a district would like to use locally for planning they may.”. (Change on 3/18/13)**

The *PARCC Assessment Administration Capacity Planning Tool* is designed to assist local educators in determining roughly how many days they will need to administer the assessments given their current device/bandwidth capacity, and how they might accommodate a reduced number of days by increasing the number of devices and/or amount of bandwidth.

The *Assessment Administration Capacity Planning Tool* is a spreadsheet that will allow schools to evaluate the extent to which their current computer inventory and bandwidth is sufficient to administer PARCC’s computer-based assessments, as well as model what they could do with increased capacity. The *Assessment Administration Capacity Planning Tool* and accompanying users’ guide are posted at <http://parcconline.org/assessment-administration-guidance>.

**In order to make use of the Tool, school/district personnel will need to enter the following school-level information:**

- 1) the number of students in each tested grade; (you should know this already from your TRT tool if you have corrected the number of enrolled students in the school survey portion.
- 2) the number of computers available for testing that meet PARCC’s minimum technology specifications;\* - you should have this in your TRT tool under devices available for the testing environment or to be movable to the testing environment.

- 3) bandwidth availability; - **I will have WNYRIC staff check this again based on anything new in this document**
- 4) estimates for instructional and office uses of bandwidth that will be taking place during assessment sessions – **I will ask WNYRIC staff to help with figuring this out.**
- 5) the number of assessment administration days to use as a target for the calculated models.

**I have attempted to shorten this and explain how this fits with what we have been told thus far. Until we get further guidance which portions NYS adopts, this should be viewed as PARCC's path which is informing NYS. I will continue to update you as answers to my questions are received from NYSED.**